UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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WEISS, et al., : 05-CV-

, et al., : 05-CV-4622 (CPS) (MDG)
: 07-CV-916 (CPS) (MDG)

Plaintiff. :

: May 22, 2009

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V. : Brooklyn, New York

:

NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK, :

et al.,

Defendant. :

TRANSCRIPT OF CIVIL CAUSE FOR CONFERENCE
BEFORE THE HONORABLE MARILYN D. GO
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

APPEARANCES:

For the Plaintiff: GARY OSEN, ESQ.

AARON SCHLANGER, ESQ. JAMES BONNER, ESQ.

For the Defendant: LAWRENCE FRIEDMAN, ESQ.

YEORA PARK, ESQ.

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THE COURT: Weiss vs. Natwest, docket number 2005-
CV-4622, and Applebaum vs. Natwest, docket number 2007-CV-
    Will counsel please state their names for the record?
For the plaintiff?
         MR. OSEN:
                    Gary Osen for the Weiss plaintiffs,
joined by my colleague, Aaron Schlanger.
         MR. BONNER: Your Honor, Jim Bonner for the
Applebaum plaintiffs.
         MR. FRIEDMAN: Good morning, your Honor, Larry
Friedman from Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton, on behalf
of National Westminster Bank. With me are my colleagues,
Yeora Park and Kirsten (ui).
          THE COURT: I've looked at your motion papers.
It's your motion, Mr. Osen.
          MR. OSEN: Let me start by doing something which
is probably not generally recommended, which is concede a
particular point to my adversary. We agree with Mr.
Friedman about one critical point, which is that the
relevance of certain materials belonging to RBS is
determined by the degree to which you can impute scienter
(ph) to the parent group. And that means that only records
which actually sort of percolate up to the group risk level
would then impact the scienter of the group risk in its sort
of global analysis, if you will, of terror finance risks.
          I will say that I checked with my colleagues, who
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are more actively involved in the meet and confer process in this, and no one has any recollection, prior to Mr. Friedman's response of being advised that there were only two customers who were responsive, specifically friends of Alaxa (ph) or Yousef Islam (ph), I'm sorry. So our initial position, your Honor, with respect to that is this: Mr. Friedman in his letter refers to records that have been produced to date. That's his phraseology. We would submit that at the completion of the record production and the search that is currently ongoing, the number of responsive entities may be two, it may be three, it may be five. We don't sitting here today know the answer to that. But whatever that universe is, we would evaluate on the basis of the disclosures that are made. With respect to the two which Mr. Friedman has identified, we believe that the friends of Alaxa materials are clearly demonstrably relevant and directly Germain to the allegations in the complaint. With respect to the artist formerly known as Mr. Stevens, I think we would reserve judgment on that, both because I think it's at least on its face somewhat more tangential and secondly because of at least the prospect of an additional bank secrecy issue relating to the Jersey Isles. Overall, however, I think you know, if I can just briefly emphasize the themes, for us the important issue is

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of course that because Natwest compliance functions particularly after the merger were consolidated into RBS, we have received documents from RBS continually through the The defendant has identified RBS on its Rule 26 disclosure as an entity that has evidence, etc. think that's seriously in dispute. The only issues for us apart from the identify of those that cross into group compliance function is twofold: (1) is that we deal with it and with all these issues by date certain so that we can at least approach the time frame set forth in our existent scheduling order, and (2) as a side note on burden, to the extent the court wants to explore that further, we do have some additional thoughts on the representations made about the burden to date. Well, Mr. Osen has certainly MR. FRIEDMAN: narrowed the issues. THE COURT: I will narrow the issue. I suspect. Your Honor, as we made MR. FRIEDMAN: plain, our view on relevance is based on plaintiff's relevance theory and Mr. Osen has confirmed that he agrees The two customers have been identified -- if I understand Mr. Osen, what Mr. Osen is saying this morning is asking that the subpoena be enforced to the extent of the Friends of Alaxa customer file, and I can well understand the relevance of that.

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merger of Natwest into the RBS?

With respect to the burden issue, again as Mr. Osen has limited this to Friends of Alaxa, as a practical matter, I have to acknowledge that if your Honor engaged in the same analysis as then magistrate Judge Matsumoto engaged in with respect to an English bank and English customer, even though here we do have a different circumstance that it's a nonparty, and we have a different circumstance that it involves a customer that's not accused to being in the causal chain leading to plaintiff's injuries, I will recognize that your Honor would probably strike the balance on English bank secrecy in the same vein Magistrate Judge Matsumoto did. I will say that we -- if your Honor rules that the Friends of Alaxa should be produced, we will need what I think will be a stipulated word akin to what we've entered into previously to make the record that Natwest is producing its file under court compulsion, so that there's a record for English purposes why this is being done and I detect from Mr. Osen's nod that that will be acceptable to have an order requiring us to produce that file on the same terms as we've agreed to in the past. Excuse me for interrupting, I didn't THE COURT: really focus on the nature of the organizational structure. Mr. Osen mentioned that there was a Natwest, there was a

MR. FRIEDMAN: Well --1 No. When did this relationship start? 2 THE COURT: MR. FRIEDMAN: I believe it was around 2000 but I 3 can't say that with certainty. There is the RBS group your 4 5 Honor, which is the umbrella, and under the RBS group is Natwest, RBS which is a separate bank, RBSI, and Coats (ph) 6 7 and Ulster bank, and other entities. So RBS was never, RBS 8 Bank was never merged into the RBS group, Natwest was never 9 merged into the RBS group. 10 People refer to it colloquially as a merger 11 because it was a major acquisition for Natwest to be a part, 12 but it's under the umbrella of Natwest group. But I 13 understand plaintiff's relevance theory and I appreciate Mr. 14 Osen's agreement that plaintiff's theory of relevance is 15 that knowledge is to be imputed to Natwest based on what was 16 known at the level of the group level departments that 17 provide shared services to the banks in the group. 18 And, therefore, as I argued in my letter and which 19 Mr. Osen is agreeing with, the only -- since the alleged 20 imputation of knowledge in Natwest is based on a conduit of 21 the group level departments, the only customer records that would relevant would be for customers that came to the 22 2.3 attention of group level departments and to date we have 24 identified two.

The second issue was burden. Your Honor, I well

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recognize that if your Honor requires that we produce only the Friends of Alaxa customer file, which is what Mr. Osen is now asking for, that the burden of argument is lessened than if it was what the subpoena calls for on its face, which is a group-wide search of six banks on two or three continents. So I well recognize that burden shakes out. The bank secrecy issue --THE COURT: Actually, my question is partially directed towards the relevance and burden. Because if the relationship did not begin until 2000, and the subpoena seeks documents from 1996, I'll first hear from Mr. Osen as to whether or not that is an appropriate time period because the court does have a duty to make sure that the discovery processes are narrowly tailored. Right, your Honor. I think the issue MR. OSEN: has to be bifurcated between what you might call the red flag stage vs. the underlying documentation question. I'll walk it through with a practical example. Stipulating for purposes of this discussion that the acquisition of Natwest took place in 2000 give or take, end of 2000, formalized early 2001, what have you. Effectively, RBS operates the group risk management, group security for all of its component parts, or at least for Natwest, we know definitively.

means that when there's a let's say, alert for Interpol

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related to terror financing in 2002, it doesn't go to a
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    Natwest department, it goes to an RBS department.
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              THE COURT: Right. No, I --
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                         Okay, so that part is the sort of
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    foundational level.
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              THE COURT: I think you don't even have to address
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    anything after the -- any records after the date of the
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    acquisition.
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                         Understood, your Honor.
              MR. OSEN:
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                         Okay, so I'm really focusing on
              THE COURT:
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    records before the date of the acquisition.
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              MR. OSEN:
                         Right. So now --
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                         And also, I don't know about the other
              THE COURT:
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    banks under the RBS umbrella because I don't know if any of
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    those banks would have been acquired some time after 200.
              MR. FRIEDMAN: But I'm afraid it would be germane,
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    your Honor, because Friends of Alaxa is a customer only of
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         It's the only bank, so we're just talking about one
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    customer of one bank.
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              THE COURT: Alright then, we're really just
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    talking -- my question is really how far back should the
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    search qo?
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                         Understood, your Honor. I think the
              MR. OSEN:
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    answer is that once you have a group risk issue, whether
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    it's Friends of Alaxa or anybody else that percolates, let's
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say in 2002, the question then becomes how does one assess the risk and analysis for that file the way a bank or forensic review would do. And that goes back to the original KYC of the customer when the account is opened, it goes to any other transactions that might be part of a look back at the account.

So for example, to use an illustration. In 2004
RBS made the tactic transfer to an entity in the Palestinian
territories that gets blocked by an Israeli bank because
it's on the Israeli unlawful designation list. And that
creates a record inside RBS saying this transaction was
flagged for terrorism concerns, what do we do, et cetera.

We would argue, your Honor, that records that customer going back even earlier before 2000 are pertinent and relevant for a number of reasons: (1) because they contained the KYC information on the customer, (2) because they also contained potentially evidence of other transfers to the same entities that are the cause of the original group level concern at a later point.

When banks review their customer and the risk levels that they encounter, when they have an issue, they are supposed to go back and assess the customer as a whole both from a KYC standpoint and from the standpoint of whether there are other similar problematic transactions or anything else that might raise a flag once the original flag

has been raised. So the transaction that may trigger a RBS risk analysis is in 2002 but it's the entirety of the file that then tells you what they should have been looking at.

MR. FRIEDMAN: In regard to that may be right, we should also note -- and through the wonders of e-mailing, I'm checking when Friends of Alaxa became a customer of RBS because this may be moot depending on when they did become a customer. But they're not dealing with this in a vacuum your Honor, we're dealing with it in the context of burden, of balancing relevance and burden.

And your Honor having ordered in September that only a customer file be produced, we've since been frankly had our arms twisted a bit to avoid petition motion practiced by agreement to a broader definition of customer file. And I think given the burden and relevance balance that needs to be struck, that your Honor should require the production only occur as of the time that RBS came under this umbrella, that RBS came under the shared services. And Mr. Osen can come back to your Honor if there is something that he finds in the documents from that period forward suggesting it's necessary to go farther back.

But whereas your Honor had originally required in this context that we produce only a customer file, we're now being asked to produce account statements, backups for certain wire transfers, e-mails that are available on the

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computers of the relationship manager and assistant relationship manager. So Mr. Osen's argument may be all well and good in theory, but taken in a vacuum and balancing the relevance and the burden I think at least in the first instance your Honor should take their theory as it's presented and requires production only to occur with respect to records from when the account came under the supervision of the group departments going forward. And as I said, I am --I think you're really -- it's not THE COURT: appropriate to apply my limitations for the sale because when I made my discovery burdens last September, it was with the expectation that we were dealing solely with the knowledge of Natwest. So that the records of these other entities were more tangential and now that we know that we have to go up one level in determining knowledge, it would strike me that the same kind of search that was permitted with respect to Interpol should apply here. So, your Honor, we can provide that MR. FRIEDMAN: As I said, I think this may be moot because I'm not quite sure when Friends of Alaxa became a customer. again, subject to stipulated order for the record, we will gather the same information for Friends of Alaxa. I do need to disagree with Mr. Rosen on timing. In his letter to your Honor, he made a point of asking for a

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June 15 deadline for the electronic records from four group level departments. As I had said to Mr. Osen shortly before he wrote that letter, we think we can do that by the end of So the difference between June 15 and June 30 is not that great. We produced all the electronic records we have, there is one more batch of electronic records that we need to look for. The July 15 date obviously was untenable if we had to go through six banks but I'm not equipped to represent to your Honor today when we can produce these materials for Friends of Alaxa. The person who is in charge of this is having her deposition taken by one of Mr. Osen's colleagues as we speak. But I will speak to that witness as soon as she comes off the deposition and ask her if that file can be put together. I will tell you that that file should be put together as promptly as possible, and just let Mr. Osen as to whether he can actually get it done. July 15 may be realistic but I don't really feel it would be right for me to argue the point because now that Mr. Osen is limited to this one file, I don't know what my client can do. That makes sense to stagger the THE COURT: production of the customer file. Well, that's what we always do. MR. FRIEDMAN:

always -- for example, other customers of Natwest that have

been identified we produce the customer files and the transactional records are following. We really are doing this as quickly as we can.

THE COURT: Let me suggest that you might be able to speed up production, and I may be wrong in even making this assumption given the issues that arose with respect to the redactions, but if you err on the side of not redacting and rely on the confidentiality that's in place, you might be able to speed up the production.

MR. FRIEDMAN: Right, there are -- I hear your Honor but that's not what slows us up. What slows us up is getting the personnel in place and getting the electronic searches done in place. But we're doing the best we can. So what Mr. Osen asked for is ready by June 15, I expect we're going to have by the end of June and everything is being done on a rolling basis. And I'll give Mr. Osen a call in the next few days to tell him what I'm told we can do with the Friends of Alaxa file and we'll get it out.

MR. OSEN: Your Honor ,at the risk of sort of ruining the spirit of agreement here, if I can just go back before we get to the actual deadlines, return to the original issue on two points.

(1) I want to make clear that our position -- your Honor has ruled one way or the other, but our position is that we're not simply asking for the Friends of Alaxa file.

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We're asking for Friends of Alaxa file based on the fact that at the moment up until this point in the production there are only two entities that are involved. THE COURT: I understand, I think Mr. Friedman understands. And I certainly do. I just want to be clear about that for MR. OSEN: the record. THE COURT: I think we've established some ground rules and actually related to that from the last conference we had, have you reached some sort of agreement on transactions, you know that the threshold transactions? MR. FRIEDMAN: Well, we're going through the process of generating that one month that your Honor told We're awaiting that. MR. OSEN: Your Honor, the other thing is, if I may approach for a moment, I'll give a copy. It's related to this whole question of how the process works with dates and so forth. This is a copy of a record we received from the defendant last Friday. I don't know if the time this was created whether they called this yet a qoalkeeper record or not so I won't characterize it, except to say that it's somewhat similar to the later iterations of the group risk records that were created by RBS. This one presumably was produced by Natwest in its prior iteration. And it's a

11:00:05 money laundering disclosure for the Palestine and

Lebanon Relief Fund which is the predecessor name and 1 formulation of Interpal (ph). 2 MR. FRIEDMAN: By the way, your Honor, I object to 3 this theme being brought up because it's not within the 4 5 scope of what was raised for today, but I just want to note what Mr. Osen just said about being the predecessor to 6 7 Interpal is wrong. And in fact, I have a document --8 because I likely suspected he would try to quibble this with 9 your Honor, I have a document from the English government pointing out that they're a separate entity from Interpal. 10 11 MR. OSEN: I'm only going based on the SDGT 12 designation, your Honor. But I'm limiting my point to 13 actually page 4, I'm sorry page 5 of the document. 14 middle of the page, it indicates other accounts known to be 15 If you see that. And underneath it, it says Ulster 16 Bank, College Green, Dublin, Ireland. 17 Ulster Bank, I don't know if it was true in 2000 18 or when but it's currently within the RBS group. It was 19 perhaps not part of the RBS group at the time that this 20 precursor goalkeeper record existed. But this is an example 21 of what I discussed earlier so that a retroactive search and 22 analysis. 23 That is, when you have a customer in 2002 or 2004, 24 who raises some kind of flag. In the case of Interpol, it's

designated by the United States government or what have you.

The records and analysis that may be done of all accounts whether held by Natwest or other entities within the group, then becomes relevant again when you're looking at the customer.

And so just as prior iterations of Interpol were relevant for analysis of Interpol, so, too, other accounts in what turned out to be sister banks of the group become relevant. It's very hard when you're sort of going down the rabbit hole of the money trail to arbitrarily cut it off at 1995, 1999 or even in fact to 1990.

We had always understood, and I recognize the distinction Mr. Friedman is trying to make, that Interpol started in 1994 and that's why we had the relevant time period we have in our things. But when you see that it was in its prior iteration a customer of the bank going back at least on this record to 1990, that's material we regard not only as relevant but because it may have generated as it did here other issues or concerns at an earlier time, the whole picture is not set by arbitrary cut offs but by what the record actually leads you to.

MR. FRIEDMAN: I don't what point Mr. Osen is trying to make other than the scope of discovery can evolve as documents are produced, and I acknowledge that and we're going through a real example of that today. I understand an issue has been made in the depositions that are going on

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this week about the bank's relationship with this entity,
which again, I have a report that Mr. Osen is familiar with
-- in fact, (ui) marked as the exhibit this week, I
understand, which makes the point that these are separate
charities. And I agree with Mr. Osen that the relevance
analysis changes as documents are produced. Again, that's
what brings us here today.
          THE COURT: Well, I think that there is currently
no dispute. I just hope your making -- I have to say we do
have a date of 1992 that is the date of the antiterrorism
act, that I would think would set, would help us to the
extent that you want to expand.
                    The date of 1992, your Honor, in terms
         MR. OSEN:
of the civil provision --
          THE COURT: I realize that. I may be --
         MR. OSEN: But if you're just looking at the
document, your Honor, as an example, and I'm not trying to
argue my case here, but if you look at page 4 of the
document where they list transactions that raise suspicions,
et cetera, they are from 1992. That doesn't go to the
question of whether a transfer in 1992 would be the
proximate cause of injury. It goes to how the bank
understood the risk level of the client going through time.
          THE COURT:
                     I understand that. It was the same
kind of passing comment that you just made.
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MR. FRIEDMAN: So I think, your Honor, we should submit a stipulated order for the production of the Friends of Alaxa file and we'll go to it. THE COURT: Okay. That's fine, your Honor. If I may MR. OSEN: return now to Mr. Friedman's point about the schedule. Obviously, we have no problem setting a date of I think you said June 30th instead of June 15. That's not the issue. For us the question is a little bit more complex because I assume what Mr. Friedman's referring to by June 30th is the production of materials, the electronic records and the, what he previously defined as the customer file for Natwest customers. We have a stipulation in place which comports closer to what we understand customer files to mean and we sort of resolved that dispute as Mr. Friedman alluded to. But that's the heart of the matter if you will in terms of the production. And I'll give you just by way of an illustration they've produced to us maybe 50, 60 pages for a Natwest customer called Muslim Aid, which presumptively is in the physical customer file at the branch. We've had our stipulation in place that will give us the account records, the wire transfers up to certain limits etc. for that. That's really where the meat of the

matter is and those records which are the account

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statements, the wire transfers, where the money went to etc.
is what we're really concerned about. So it's not the date
of production of these sort of minimalist customer folder in
the bank branch but the heart of the material that we have
sought since last year.
          And, you know, right now, as we are currently
scheduled, we have a December 18 fact discovery cut off and
October 23<sup>rd</sup> deadline for motions to compel. And you can see
where, you know, Mr. Friedman's representation of a search
is that a single person at RBS is conducting the searches.
That presumably, when they get to the level of account
records and so on, they have more people working on it, but
regardless, for our purposes, we only care about date
certain of completion so that we can analyze the records and
come back.
          THE COURT: Well, I think he was talking about a
different search.
          MR. FRIEDMAN:
                         I was, your Honor. And I think we
should not be negotiating in front of your Honor production
schedules.
          THE COURT: Well ,I think --
          MR. FRIEDMAN: Mr. Osen's letter --
          THE COURT: Mr. Friedman, I'm just trying -- I
think he was asking and let me just clarify in my mind what
production on June 30th.
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MR. FRIEDMAN: And that was the point I was going to make, your Honor. In his letter, Mr. Osen asks that a deadline be set of June 15<sup>th</sup> for the electronically stored records from four departments. That we do believe we can complete by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

And with respect to the customer files, we have produced the customer files for all of the seven customers where there are files that have been found. Not all types of accounts had customer files. There are three customers for whom we found files and we've produced them. There are four customers for whom we haven't found customer files.

The next point is account statements, and we expect to produce the account statements quickly. Let me just also take exception to Mr. Osen's statement that these are documents they requested last year. We just reached a stipulation about the other things that we produced a couple of weeks ago. We're going to produce the account statements shortly, as quickly as we can.

The plaintiffs have agreed in the stipulation that they're going to identify the outgoing wire transfers that they're interested in and we're going to look for those records. We've agreed to produce backup records for incoming wire transfers above a certain threshold. That has to be done manually. It's not being done by one person but it has to be done manually because it's going to take some

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this.

Is there anything else?

time. And we -- the fourth category we've got the e-mails, which we've already started searching through. So what will be produced on June 30 is the remaining electronically stored records from the four departments, I believe there's one department left to go. And that's all that Mr. Osen put on the table for today. The other categories of documents are the subject of our recent stipulation, first account statements we expect to produce those shortly, I can't say exactly when but they are being prepared. They will then look at those and identify the outgoing wire transfers for which there is a record. At the same time, we have people engaging in the manual review of the account statements for the incoming wire transfer records. I have already been warned that that manual review and then looking for the records based on the manual review will take some time. And we're getting the emails together. We are doing this as quickly as we can and our agreement to these additional categories of documents is just a couple of weeks old. It's not something that dates back to last year. THE COURT: Well, I take it Mr. Osen is expressing some concern that there will only be one person --MR. FRIEDMAN; No, no. But I think enough has been said about THE COURT:

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MR. OSEN: Your Honor, my point is not really to
disparage the efforts of the defendant in collecting the
records or the challenge involved in reconstructing the
        It's more an issue of having a date fixed that will
allow us to platform everything else that we need to do in
the schedule from there. That's really it. And --
          THE COURT: Well I think what you need to do is
find out from Mr. Friedman after you've had an opportunity
to confer with your client as to when you expect completion
the production.
                         I will do that, your Honor.
         MR. FRIEDMAN:
         MR. OSEN:
                    That's it, your Honor.
         THE COURT:
                     Okay.
         MR. OSEN:
                    Have a good holiday.
         THE COURT: You too. You'll call me when you need
to schedule --
         MR. FRIEDMAN: We'll submit the stipulated order
with the Friends of Alaxa production.
         THE COURT:
                     Alright.
         MR. OSEN:
                    Have a good weekend, your Honor.
         THE COURT:
                     You too.
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I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter. ELIZABETH BARRON June 11, 2009